

Minutes of Meeting
Grafton Planning Board
Monday, June 8, 2015

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A regular meeting of the Grafton Planning Board was held on Monday, June 8, 2014 in Conference Room A at the Grafton Municipal Center, 30 Providence Road, Grafton, MA. Present for the meeting were Chairman David Robbins, Vice-Chair Michael Scully, Robert Hassinger and Linda Hassinger. Staff present was Town Planner Joseph Laydon, Assistant Planner Ann Morgan and Office Manger Nicole Larson.

Chairman Robbins called the meeting to order at 7:00 p.m.

PUBLIC INPUT ITEM 1:

No public input was received.

PUBLIC PRESENTATION ITEM 2A: CONWAY SCHOOL OF DESIGN – FISHERVILLE SITE / MILL VILLAGES PARK – DRAFT INTERPRETIVE MASTER PLAN PRESENTATION

Joseph Laydon, Town Planner introduced Conway School of Landscape Design students Hillary Collins, Jillian Ferguson and Jeff Frisch, Jr., who have been working on a component of the “Creating a Teaching Landscape” project which was funded by a grant from the Blackstone Regional National Heritage Corridor Commission. Ms. Collins introduced the landscape plan for Fisherville Mill. She said the project envisions transforming the area from its current state into a dynamic recreational area which showcases the original history of the old mill while creating a living landscape backdrop and serve as an iconic ecological, educational and recreational area for South Grafton and the extended community. The plan included walking paths along the river with outlooks for the dam and Fisherville Pond. The plan also included areas for development, a “ghost” outline of the Former mill, parking and rain gardens for storm water.

Following the student’s presentation of the updated plans, Gene Bernat, the owner of the former Fisherville Mill site spoke for several minutes to provide a brief history of what the site once was and how the proposed stages of the design could benefit the local community. Though the initial site plan was intended to include low income housing, research implied that the current housing market would not support the number of residential units established within the 40R Zoning Overlay Bylaw.

Mr. Bernat said the “Creating a Teaching Landscape” project will focus on the natural assets of the site and create a 1st class opportunity for hands on environmental and ecological education, specifically by way of the eco-machine and exploring the opportunity for creating biodiversity among the site’s flora while providing community enrichment. Mr. Bernat suggested that the park renovations be handled incrementally, not only provide a sense of completion as the transformation occurs, but also so not to over-saturate the development of the area.

After collecting suggestions from the audience and the Board during a brief interactive activity, the Planning Board was supportive of the concepts of the plans discussed and looks forward to working with Mr. Bernat and the Conway School of Landscape Design on this project in the future.

PUBLIC HEARING 10A: DEFINITIVE PLAN APPROVAL 2015-5 – “GRISTMILL VILLAGE” SUBDIVISION – CASA BUILDERS AND DEVELOPERS CORP. (APPLICANT) / MAINTANIS REALTY TRUST; WILLIAM J. & MARY J. MAINTANIS & SEPHEN A. WILSON (OWNERS)

Mr. Scully read the meeting notice and Chairman Robbins opened the public hearing. Present for the hearing was John Grenier of Casa Builders and Development Corp representing Maintanis Realty Trust: William J. & Mary J. Maintanis & Stephen A. Wilson (Owners). Also present was Jim Holland of 6 Gristmill Road, an abutter to the proposed subdivision.

Mr. Grenier began by giving a brief history on the process of the project, stating they were before the Board for a Major Residential Special Permit a little over a year ago which was granted. He said the Board approved the projects as a conventional subdivision plan. This plan exhibited one point of access off Pleasant Street, creating one main entrance road with a T-shaped layout, terminating in 2 cul-de-sacs for the majority of the lots. Mr. Grenier noted that they are requesting the following 2 waivers for their proposed development plans:

- Extend the maximum length of a dead end street subdivision road from 500 feet to 599 feet.
- Adjacent roads are less than required 600 feet or more.

Other key points noted by the applicant were as follows:

- Sewer access will be extended along Pleasant Street.
- Removal of several heritage trees for retention basin grading, without interfering with screening for several abutting lots on Barbara Jean Road.

Mr. Grenier asked for input from The Board on the following areas:

- The final width of the subdivision road
- The type of curbing within the development due to grades slightly in excess of 2%.

Mr. Hassinger recommended that we look into getting the specific guidelines from the Fire Department for what the dimensions of the roadway need to be in order for a school bus and fire truck to make a turn around. Mr. Laydon said the Fire Department has requested 24-26 foot roadway widths.

Mr. Robbins suggested that the drainage basin is indeed an aspect that he would like to see improved on the final proposal. Mr. Laydon then noted that in order to solidify the layout for the drainage, the Board needs to be prepared to make a decision on the aspect of the waiver for the length of the roadway. After further discussion, the Board noted they would be more likely to consider the roadway waiver if the plan for the drainage basin is modified as a result. Mr. Hassinger suggested that Mr. Grenier move forward with creating a 9 lot alternative and reduce the road way length and diversify the drainage, or perhaps utilizing the flat strip where the 2nd access road was originally thought to be.

Jim Holland, an abutter to the subdivision, property voiced the following questions:

- Will the large white oak in the lower region of the site be removed?
- What will be done in the way of screening if drainage basins are decentralized?

Mr. Grenier noted that the oak tree would not be removed and adequate screening will be provided in any design for the drainage basin.

The Board directed the applicant to examine the issues discussed by the Board relating to the drainage and roadway dimensions. Mr. Laydon said he would coordinate a meeting with the developer and Conservation Department to examine alternate stormwater designs.

MOTION by Mr. Hassinger **SECOND** by Linda Hassinger to grant the applicant's request to continue the hearing at 7:30pm on Monday, July 13th. **MOTION** carried unanimously 4 to 0.

JOINT ACTION ITEM 3A: DRAFT DECISION – SPECIAL PERMIT (SP2 2015-2) – HILLTOP SELF STORAGE OF GRAFTON, LLC (APPLICANT/OWNER)

JOINT ACTION ITEM 3B: DRAFT DECISION – SPECIAL PERMIT (SP 2015-3) – HILLTOP SELF STORAGE OF GRAFTON, LLC (APPLICANT/OWNER)

Before completing the draft decision, the Board and Planning Department staff discussed complications within granting this particular special permit as it could potentially sever access to the adjacent solar facility in Northbridge, which currently has established access through the Self Storage Site. Maintaining access by way of 100 Milford Road property is stated in the conditions of the solar facility access special permit granted in 2012. In efforts to avoid fracturing access for fire safety and avoid violating the conditions of the 2012 special permit, Mr. Laydon suggested that the Board needs to consider on how to align the needs of the existing solar site in Northbridge with this special permit to build a solar facility within the Hilltop Self Storage project. The concept of a Knox Box set up was discussed and viewed as a sufficient solution to provide adequate access for both Grafton and Northbridge safely in the event that it is needed.

The Board determined that this issue should be taken care of by way of cross referencing the decision of the 2012 Special Permit for the Northbridge solar facility with the access requirements in the conditions of the Hilltop Self Storage decisions. Mr. Laydon noted that there would be a total of 3 gates; one at Milford Road, one at the rear of the self storage facility and one at the entrance to the Northbridge solar facility. Mr. Laydon also mentioned that he will contact the Northbridge Fire Chief and get a detailed letter of what would need to be done to set up a Knox Box system, which other similar sites have used in the area, to ensure continuous access for Grafton Fire by way of the Hilltop Self Storage facility. The Board determines that administrative changes to the conditions in this 2015 decision will be necessary in order to reference the 2012 Special Permit and avoid violating of that Special Permit. The Board also instructed the staff to revise the condition (C2) of the 2012 Special permit to reference the current special permit needs for Hilltop Self Storage.

The Board voted 4 to 0 to continue the meeting to June 22, 2015.

EXECUTIVE SESSION ITEM 12: LITIGATION – APPEAL OF SPECIAL PERMIT (SP 2014-9) – & SITE PLAN APPROVAL – BORREGO SOLAR – 79 OLD UPTON ROAD

Mr. Robbins stated that an executive session meeting of the Planning Board is being convened at 8:43PM on June 8, 2015 for the sole purpose of discussing strategy with respect to the litigation as authorized by Massachusetts Law Chapter 38 Section 21.

Mr. Hassinger **MOVED**, Mrs. Hassinger **SECONDED** that the Board enter executive session for the sole purpose of discussing the strategy with the respect to litigation and will reconvene

regular meeting after the executive session. Mrs. Hassinger: Aye, Mr. Robbins: Aye, Mr. Hassinger: Aye, Mr. Scully: Aye.

Present for this executive session will be Planning Board members Mrs. Hassinger, Mr. Robbins, Mr. Hassinger, Mr. Scully, Town Planner Joe Laydon, Assistant Town Planner Ann Morgan, Administrative Assistant Nicole Larson and Town Counsel Ginny Cramer.

The Board returned to regular session at 8:56pm and took a five minute recess

STAFF REPORT – ITEM 5:

Mr. Laydon presented the staff report on the following items:

- Along with training, the staff as a whole has been working to come up with more clearly defined procedural instructions for the departments including Conservation staff. Mr. Laydon added that he will be continuing interviews for a Planning intern for the summer position, with the hopes for filling the position by the end of the month.
- Staff has been examining how to integrate in to the Building Department's process. Ideas on how to clarify overlay with the Building Department are being devised, particularly Condition of Occupancy (CO) with the hopes to avoid conflicts with past applicants when occupancy has been granted for projects prior to completion with the Planning Board.

DISCUSSION ITEMS ITEM 4:

No discussion items at this time.

BILLS – ITEM 6:

The bills were circulated and signed.

MINUTES OF PREVIOUS MEETING – ITEM 7:

A. Open Session Minutes of May 18, 2015

MOTION by Mr. Hassinger, **SECOND** by Mrs. Hassinger, to approve the minutes subject to a proofread by staff with the discussed minor edits. **MOTION** carried unanimously 4 to 0.

CORRESPONDENCE – ITEM 8:

No correspondence at this time

REPORTS FROM PLANNING BOARD REPRESENTATIVES ON TOWN COMMITTEES AND CMRPC – ITEM 9:

Mr. Hassinger informed the Board that CMRPC received funding to continue the Department of Local Technical Assistance (DLTA) program for the development of a Mill Village Model Bylaw.

ANY OTHER ITEMS WHICH MAY LAWFULLY COME BEFORE THE BOARD – ITEM 13:

Mr. Scully said he received comments from a resident of Northbridge concerning the Blackstone Valley bikeway. The Planning Board in Northbridge is revisiting alignment for the bikeway from a

local perspective, taking in to account the location of the Presidential Suite in Northbridge. After brief discussion, The Board feels there is not enough information on hand about the on goings for the bikeway. Mr. Laydon offered to pull together information and present to the Board at their next meeting on July 13, 2015 in order to make a determination on whether or not an opinion should be voiced on finding the bikeway as an important resource for recreation and transportation as well as access to surrounding participating towns.

WORKSHOP: ZONING AMENDMENTS FOR 2015 FALL ANNUAL AND 2016 SPRING ANNUAL TOWN MEETINGS – ITEM 11:

A. On-going work for bylaw amendment

Mr. Laydon reviewed his memo dated June 8, 2015 containing ideas for future zoning amendments. He has been unable to locate any documentation as to when the article which added language to the bylaws referencing the installation guidelines restricting sign structures that obstruct the view from 2 ½' to 7' off the ground. He stated his opinion was the height requirement was based on traffic safety and aims to allow for a clear line of sight for motorist, however he said he found it to be problematic in certain situations. The Board slated they would support replacing the rigid guidelines with more specific language based upon the line of sight for the driver's visibility. Mr. Robbins suggests that the standards for visibility set by the American Association of State Highway and Transportation Officials (AASHTO) be referenced, to create consistent and recognized safety standards. Mr. Scully noted that there is nothing in our bylaws which references a monument sign, which may be a concept we should look into. In preparation for the Fall Town Meeting, the Board will aim to create visuals as referenced in the Visual Preference Survey to give community members a physical sense between the differences of a pylon and monument signs. The Board would like this item on the Fall Town Meeting Agenda.

B. Topics that the Planning Board has identified as wanting to work on:

a. Portable Signs/A-Frame Signs

Mr. Robbins said the Board needs clarification from the Public and/or the Board of Selectman on where the problem lies with this topic. The Planning Department stated they would look into the clarity of the application and the ease in which the guidelines are utilized.

b. Kennels

The Board determined that the Fall Town Meeting will be a good opportunity to update the language on this topic. The Board would also like more direction of what the actual needs are with this issue. Staff will check in with the Clerk's Office to gather any incoming complaints on the topic. The Board would like this item on the Fall Town Meeting Agenda.

MOTION by Mr. Hassinger, **SECOND** by Mr. Scully, to extend the meeting by 10 minutes to last until 10:10PM. Motion carried unanimously 4 to 0 by roll call vote: Scully – AYE; R. Hassinger – AYE; Robbins – AYE; L. Hassinger - AYE.

c. Solar

Mr. Robbins stated that with the ever increasing applications for solar installation, it would be constructive for our department to formulate a more clear policy. The Planning

Board would like to start by gathering and understand as to what other towns have done. They would also like to simplify the review process and clarify the applicant process. The Board determines that investigating the best practices would be a good project for the incoming intern and would like this item to be on the Fall Town Meeting Agenda if possible.

C. Larger/Long-term items for continued attention of The Board

a. Rezoning of Worcester Street

The Board discussed rezoning around the area of Cumberland Farms which would allow for a more flexible village type plaza than the current commercial zoning allows for. This is a longer term issue to think about in preparation for next year's annual town meeting.

b. Rezoning of Saundersville – Village Mixed Use

Current zoning is outdated and finds commercial businesses in areas zoned as residential. With the recent addition of Cumberland Farms, The Board would like to consider this issue more closely, and incentivize the redevelopment and possible re-zoning of the area. This change was discussed as a long term issue to work on.

c. Amendments to Village Mixed Use Bylaw (issues with interpretation by Building Inspector)

The South Grafton Master Plan from 2006 references the area of Saundersville as Village Mixed Use, and introduces the idea of Village Zoning, a model that does not exist currently. The Board discussed expanding the bylaw to address a larger area than proposed in the original Master Plan. Currently there is neighborhood business zoning on south side, and residential zoning, which currently includes a plaza, on the north side. This issue of zoning is a long term point of interest for the Board to consider.

ADJOURNMENT – ITEM 15:

MOTION By Mrs. Hassinger, **SECOND** by Mr. Scully to adjourn the meeting. **MOTION** carried unanimously 4 to 0.

The meeting was adjourned at 10:10p.m.



Robert Hassinger, Clerk

EXHIBITS

- Discussion Items 4: Grafton Conservation Commission Notice of Public Hearing – Request for Determination of Applicability –21 Virginia Circle, Grafton, MA 01519 – Sharon Carroll-Tidman (Applicant/Owner)
- Item 8: Correspondence – Graves Engineering, Inc. – Peer Review – 100 Grove Street Worcester, MA - Jeffrey M. Walsh, P.E.
 - Peer Review from Graves Engineering, Inc. for Special Permit (SP 2015-6) & Site Plan Approval – Common Driveway; dated May 18, 2015; received on May 21, 2015; 3 pages.
- **Public Hearing 10A: Definitive Plan Approval 2015-5 “Gristmill Village” Subdivision – 4 Grist Mill Road & 102 Pleasant Street – Casa Builders and Developers Corp. (Applicant) / Maintanis Realty Trust; William J. & Mary J. Maintanis & Stephen A. Wilson (Owners)**
 - Unbound application packet, submitted by the Applicant; dated March 13, 2015; includes the following
 - Application for Definitive Subdivision, Cover Letter, dated March 13, 2015, no received date; 2 pages.
 - Attachment A: Waiver Request, no dated, no received date; 2 pages.
 - Application for Approval of Definitive Plan, dated February 26, 2015; received on April 21, 2015; 1 page.
 - Application for Approval of Definitive Plan, Area Within a Subdivision, dated March 13, 2015; received on April 21, 2015 ;1 page.
 - Application for Approval of Definitive Plan, Land Surveyor’s Certificate, dated March 13, 2015; received on April 21, 2015 ;1 page.
 - Application for Approval of Definitive Plan, Engineer’s Certificate dated March 13, 2015; received on April 21, 2015; 1 page.
 - Application for Approval of Definitive Plan, Verification for Approval of a Definitive Plan, dated March 13, 2015; received on April 21, 2015;1 page.
 - Application for Approval of Definitive Plan, Instruction Sheet dated March 13, 2015; received on April 21, 2015;1 page.
 - Application for Approval of Definitive Plan, Part I – General Information, dated March 13, 2015; received on April 21, 2015; 3 pages.
 - Application for Approval of Definitive Plan, Part II – Geology & Hydrology, dated March 13, 2015; received on April 21, 2015; 1 page.
 - Application for Approval of Definitive Plan, Part III – Grading and Site Development, dated March 13, 2015; received on April 21, 2015; 1 page.
 - Application for Approval of Definitive Plan, Part IV – Permits and/or Approvals Required, dated March 13, 2015; received on April 21, 2015; 1 page.
 - Application for Approval of Definitive Plan, Part V – Permits: Residential, dated March 13, 2015; received on April 21, 2015; 1 page.

- Application for Approval of Definitive Plan, Part VI – Permits: Business, dated March 13, 2015; received on April 21, 2015; 2 pages.
- Application for Approval of Definitive Plan, Part VIII – Additional Submission Materials, dated March 13, 2015; received on April 21, 2015; 1 page.
- Application for Approval of Definitive Plan, Abutters List; 2 pages
- Project Review: Memorandum, Sewer Department; dated May 1, 2015; received June 2, 2015; 4 pages.
- Project Review: Memorandum, Board of Assessors; dated May 1, 2015; received June 2, 2015; 2 pages
- Project Review: Memorandum, Board of Health; dated May 1, 2015; received May 28, 2015; 2 pages
- Project Review: Memorandum, Zoning Board of Appeals; dated May 1, 2015; received May 26, 2015; 2 pages
- Peer Review from Graves Engineering, Inc. for “Gristmill Village” Subdivision – Definitive Plan and Stormwater Review; dated May 5, 2015; received on May 13, 2015; 5 pages.
- “Gristmill Village” Definitive Plan – Proof Plan, prepared by J. M. Grenier Associates Inc.; dated April 10, 2015; no received date; 11” X 17”, black and white; 1 page.
- “Gristmill Village” Definitive Plan – Tree Plan, prepared by J. M. Grenier Associates Inc.; dated April 10, 2015; no received date; 11” X 17”, black and white; 1 page.
- Plan Set: Lot Development Plan: “Gristmill Village” Subdivision; prepared by J.M. Grenier Associates Inc.; dated March 13, 2015; 11” X 17”, black and white; includes the following:
 - C – 0.0.....Cover Sheet
 - C – 1.0.....Existing Conditions Plan 1/2
 - C – 2.0.....Existing Conditions Plan 2/2
 - C – 3.0.....Site Plan
 - C – 4.0.....Site Plan for Northeast lots
 - C – 5.0.....Layout and Materials Plan 1/2
 - C – 6.0.....Layout and Materials Plan 2/2
 - C – 7.0.....Grading and Drainage Plan
 - C – 8.0.....Utility Plan
 - C – 9.0.....Roadway Profile Plan 1/5
 - C – 10.0.....Roadway Profile Plan 2/5
 - C – 11.0.....Roadway Profile Plan 3/5
 - C – 12.0.....Roadway Profile Plan 4/5
 - C – 13.0.....Roadway Profile Plan 5/5
 - C – 14.0.....Erosion & Sedimentation Control Plan
 - C – 15.0.....Detail Plan 1/2

▪ C – 16.0.....Detail Plan 2/2

- **Workshop – Zoning Amendments for 2015 Fall Annual and 2016 Spring Annual Town Meetings**

Letter from Joe Laydon, Town Planner to The Planning Board to the Planning Board; dated June 8, 2015; 1 page